Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Canceled)

2. (Currently Amended) A process according to Claim 11, wherein the ~~ozonizating~~ozonizing step is performed at the pH of 5 or lower by an addition of a pH controlling agent.

3. (Currently Amended) A process according to Claim 11, wherein the process further comprises, prior to the step of ~~ozonizating~~ozonizing, a step of acidogenesis in which a part of the aerated aqueous suspension in the aeration tank or the separated sludge is subjected to an anaerobic biological treatment to adjust the pH thereof to a value of 5 or lower.

4. (Currently Amended) A process according to Claim 11, wherein the process further comprises a step of heating the aqueous suspension or the sludge to a temperature between 50 and 100°C before or after the ~~ozonizating~~ozonizing step.

5. (Previously Presented) A process according to Claim 11, wherein the biosludge in the aeration tank has a VSS/SS ratio maintained at a value of 0.2-0.7 and a MLVSS value maintained of 500-10000 mg/l.

6.-10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) A process for aerobic biological treatment of an aqueous organic waste comprising the steps of:

introducing the aqueous organic waste into an aeration tank;

aerating the aqueous organic waste in the aeration tank in the presence of a biosludge composed essentially of aerobic microorganisms to form an aerated aqueous suspension;

withdrawing aerated aqueous suspension from the aeration tank and introducing it into a solid/liquid separation unit;

subjecting the aerated aqueous suspension in the solid/liquid separation unit to solid/liquid separation to form a separated sludge containing the biosludge and a separated liquid phase;

withdrawing the separated liquid phase from the process as treated water;

recycling at least a portion of the separated sludge back to the aeration tank;

~~ozonizating~~ozonizing either aerated aqueous suspension withdrawn from the aeration tank or a part of the separated sludge, the ~~ozonizating~~ozonizing taking plate at a pH of 5 or lower; and

recycling either the ozonized aerated aqueous suspension or the ozonized part of the separated sludge back to the aeration tank for aerobic biological treatment.

12. (Currently Amended) A process for aerobic biological treatment of an aqueous organic waste comprising the steps of:

introducing the aqueous organic waste into an aeration tank;

aerating the aqueous organic waste in the aeration tank in the presence of a biosludge composed essentially of aerobic microorganisms to form an aerated aqueous suspension;

withdrawing aerated aqueous suspension from the aeration tank and introducing it into a membrane separation unit;

subjecting the aerated aqueous suspension in the membrane separation unit to membrane separation to form a permeated liquid and a concentrated sludge containing the biosludge;

withdrawing the permeated liquid from the process as treated water;

recycling at least a portion of the concentrated sludge back to the aeration tank;

~~ozonizating~~ozonizing either aerated aqueous suspension withdrawn from the aeration tank or a part of the concentrated sludge, the ~~ozonizating~~ozonizing taking place at a pH of 5 or lower; and

recycling either the ozonized aerated aqueous suspension or the ozonized part of the concentrated sludge back to the aeration tank for aerobic biological treatment.

13. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 11, wherein the amount of biosludge ozonized and converted into BOD components is greater than the amount of excess sludge generated in the bioreactor.

14. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 12, wherein the amount of biosludge ozonized and converted into BOD components is greater than the amount of excess sludge generated in the bioreactor.

15. (Currently Amended) The process according to Claim 11, wherein aerated aqueous suspension withdrawn from the aeration tank is ~~ozonizated~~ozonized.

16. (Currently Amended) The process according to Claim 12, wherein aerated aqueous suspension withdrawn from the aeration tank is ~~ozonizated~~ozonized.